

HCS HB 607 -- LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

SPONSOR: Hill

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 7 to 3. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 7 to 4.

This bill specifies that a person who intentionally targets a law enforcement officer shall be guilty of a class A felony and shall not be eligible for suspended imposition of sentence or suspended execution of sentence. The person shall not be eligible for parole or conditional release until the person has served at least 10 years in prison if the person, after deliberation upon the matter, knowingly causes serious physical injury to such officer, and shall not be eligible for parole or conditional release until the person has served at least five years in prison if the person, after deliberation upon the matter, attempts, with a deadly weapon, to cause serious physical injury to such officer.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that it is better to create a separate offense for targeting law enforcement officers rather than opening up the hate crime statute. All law enforcement officers know there are inherent dangers to their jobs, but this bill deals more with a premeditated attack on a law enforcement officer because of his or her actual or perceived status as a law enforcement officer.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Hill; Missouri Police Chief's Association; Missouri Fraternal Order of Police, St. Louis Police Officers Association; and the Missouri State Troopers Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.